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The use of images as an arts based intervention to promote therapeutic approaches to social work supervision



Dr Ephrat Huss

Associate Professor, Ben Gurion
University of the Negev, Israel

Dr Trish Hafford-Letchfield

Reader in Social Work, Middlesex
University, UK

Impact of globalisation

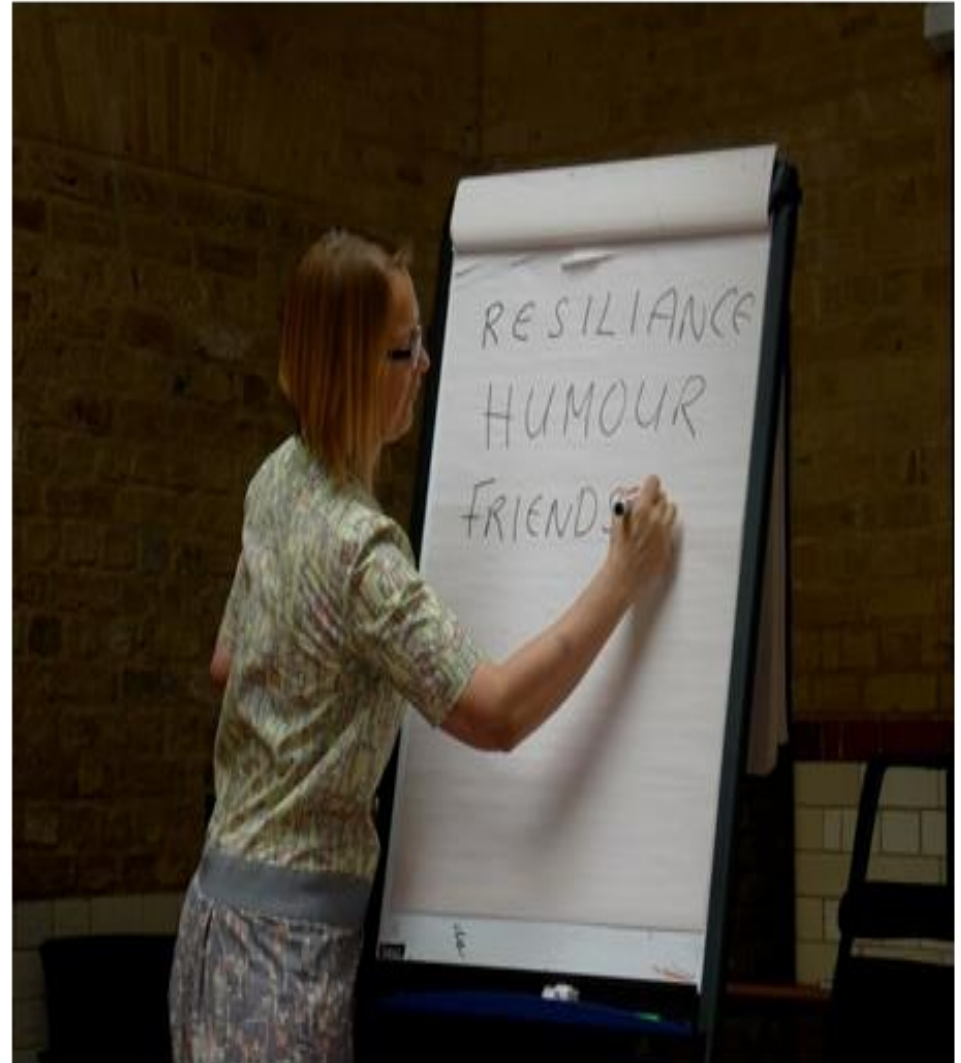
**Turbulence of social work and
its environment**

**Managing the impact of
austerity on everyday
relationships**



What can help?

- Compassion fatigue and secondary trauma
- Building emotional resilience
- Finding practical / alternative tools to support self-regulation
- Improve quality of support which in turn has impact on quality of services



Supervision practice – traditions and quality issues

- Lacks firm empirical basis (Carpenter et al, 2013)
- Content more action oriented and managerial than welfare or support focused
- Evaluation demonstrates that innovation is slow to embed in supervision practice
- Significance of relationship-based approaches (Munro, 2011)



Arts-based methods & Arts-based research



- What we see and what we say – combining visual and verbal information which can be conflicted (Huss, 2011)
- Making use of cross disciplinary analysis (Hafford-Letchfield et al, 2013)
- Museum guide, art therapist or exhibition curator (Couchman et al, 2014)
- Distancing using metaphors/symbols (Huss, 2013)

Arts for counteracting stress

The arts are cited as especially effective in counteracting the stress of trauma situations in that it incorporates different levels of intervention in treating clients (Hass-Cohen, 2003; 2008; Klingman, Koenigsfield, & Markman, 1987; Mallay, 2002), such as:

- combining the senses through observing, touching, and manipulating art materials
- as well as addressing the symbolic manifestation of traumatic experience
- while also creating a cognitive hermeneutic zone for more positive re-interpretations of perceptions of the traumatic events (Allen, 1993; Appelon, 2001; Cohen-Hass, 2008; Perry, Pollard, Blakely, Baker, & Vigilante, 1995; Pifalo, 2002; Sarid & Huss, 2009).

Methods and process





Identifying an issue in practice that causes stress or discomfort

Drawing an image of the stressor, colour, lines, shapes, symbols

Using a scale 1 – 10 articulating the amount of stress associated and felt

Describing and sharing using imagery

Listening, reflection, and focusing through therapeutic means

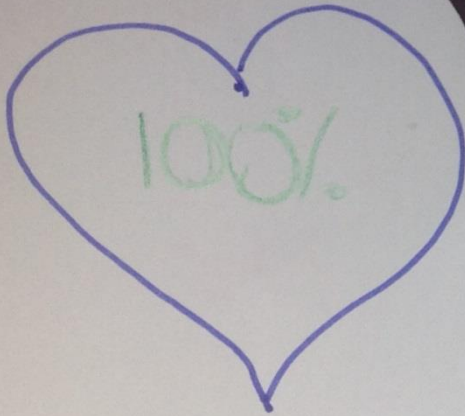
Combining verbal and visual methods



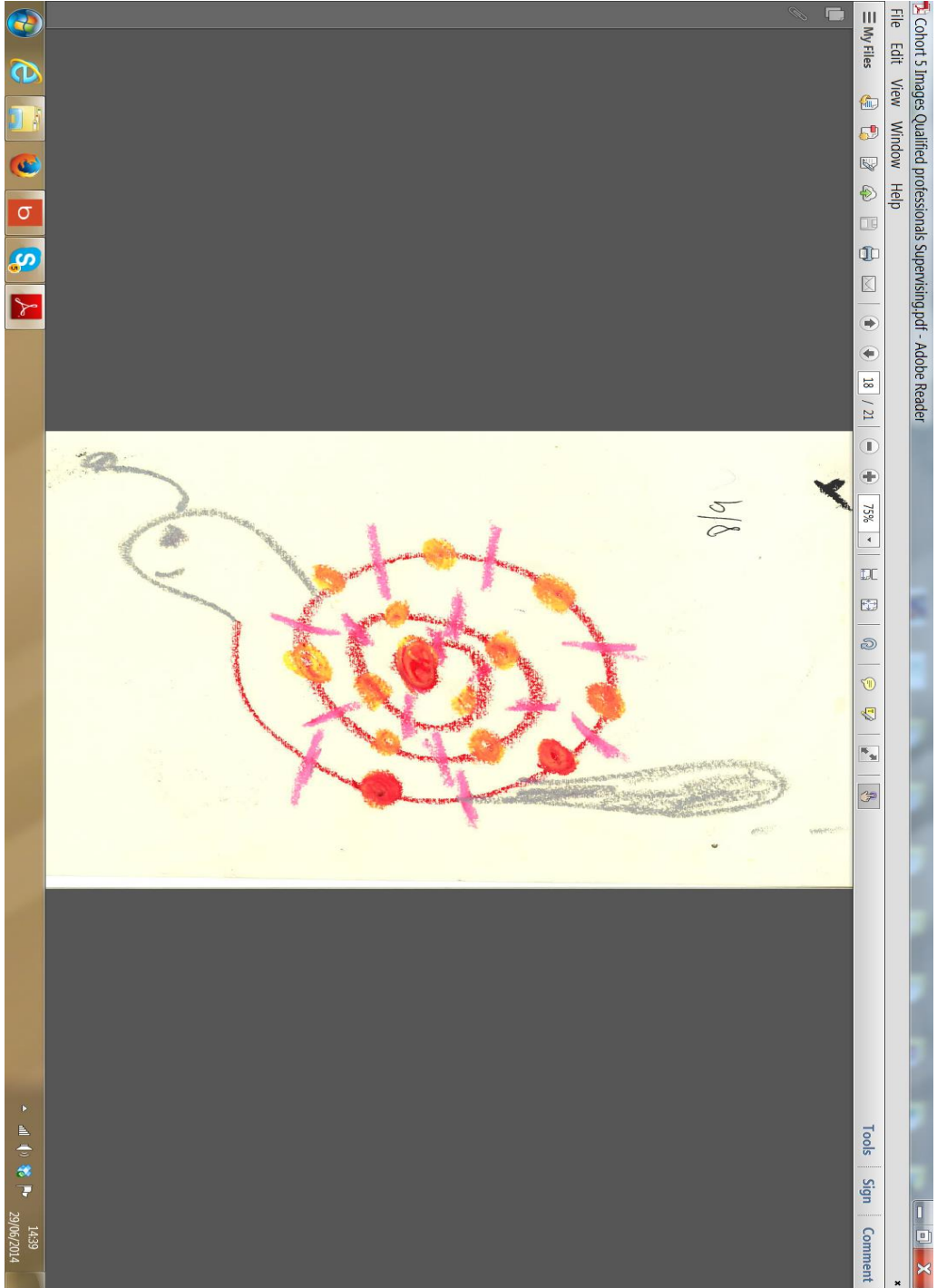
Disconnection and disorientation

f

5



“Whirlpool to Snail”



Next stage

- Stress narratives
- Adding to the image - symbolic control and compositional explanation of the image
- Envisaging solutions
- Clarifying coping potential



**Completing Validated
Scales:
COPE Inventory
Role Strain**



1.

Content level of stress: what is going on

- Phenomenological explanation of art work by the drawer, within a group context
- Naming and identifying the sources of their stress was helpful in gaining control of the diffuse sense of anxiety. In the model, they drew the sources of stress, gave them names and labels and viewed them from the distance of the page. Furthermore, the group also provided multiple perspectives and reassurance that their feelings were common to many.

2.

Identifying stress in the art work

- form of the composition e.g. colors chosen in the drawing.
- Compositional irregularities as single objects taking up the whole page, people without faces, areas encapsulated or cut off from the picture
- fragmentation of the composition
- repetition of objects or symbols
- disjointed elements, intense shading, strong dividing lines,
- other elements that disturb the integration, proportion and harmony of the art work (Rubin, 2001; Furth, 1998; Wilson, 2001).

3.

Identifying resilience through reframing, and adjusting the art work

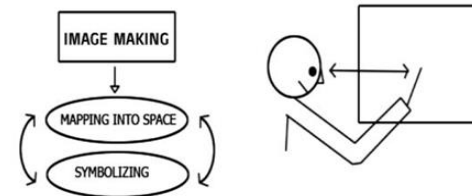
Finally, the social workers were encouraged to change and adapt their own art to create a paradigm shift toward highlighting strengths and suggesting tangible options of more adaptive coping (adding, connecting between, subtracting, modulating, integrating, shifting size and area verbal re-framing of meanings).

Analysis and evaluation

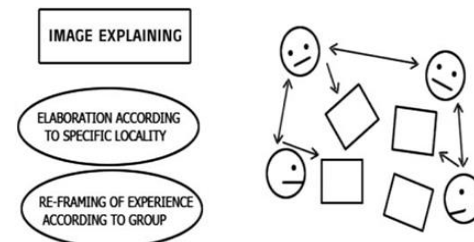
- Finding an appropriate analytical strategy (images as subject) verbal and visual explanation of composition and content (Huss, 2011; 2013)
- Using validated scales for triangulation to assess stress reactions
- Artist self-reporting
- Transferability to range of contexts
- Developing self as a resource in supervision

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A. SUBJECTIVE EXP:



B. CONSTRUCTED EXP:



C. INTERACTIVE EXP:

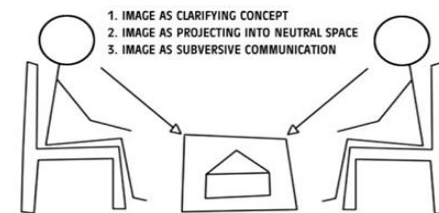


Figure 1 Typology of uses of images according to location in research.

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